

A Resurrection Really Did Happen

Psalm 118:14-29 (April 24, 2022)

Psalm 118:14-29

- ¹⁴The Lord is my strength and my might; he has become my salvation.
¹⁵There are glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous: “The right hand of the Lord does valiantly;
¹⁶the right hand of the Lord is exalted; the right hand of the Lord does valiantly.”
¹⁷I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord.
¹⁸The Lord has punished me severely, but he did not give me over to death.
¹⁹Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.
²⁰This is the gate of the Lord; the righteous shall enter through it.
²¹I thank you that you have answered me and have become my salvation.
²²The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.
²³This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.
²⁴This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.
²⁵Save us, we beseech you, O Lord! O Lord, we beseech you, give us success!
²⁶Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord.
²⁷The Lord is God, and he has given us light. Bind the festal procession with branches, up to the horns of the altar.
²⁸You are my God, and I will give thanks to you; you are my God, I will extol you.
²⁹O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Historical Context

Psalm 118 is the last psalm in a group of six psalms in Book Five known as the “the Egyptian Hallel” (Psalms 113-118), psalms that are used in present-day Jewish life at the Passover meal on the eighth day of that annual spring celebration. Psalms 113 and 114 are recited before the meal. Psalms 115-118 are recited at the conclusion of the meal while drinking the fourth cup of celebratory wine. Many scholars maintain that in ancient Jewish life Psalm 118 was used in liturgical processions, perhaps an entrance liturgy into the temple in Jerusalem.

Theme: A Resurrection Really Did Happen

In the context of Easter, praise is particularly crucial. For ours is a world which increasingly looks for salvation from evil in the building of walls, the carrying of weapons, and the hoarding of resources. It is ours, then, as the people of God to posit an alternative way forward rooted in the hope we have in Jesus Christ, to assert that we live in a world where a resurrection really did happen. That God really is on the move, redeeming and restoring the world to himself in Jesus Christ. That Christ really did inaugurate a kingdom that has taken root in our hearts and that compels us to new ways of being and behaving characterized by justice, righteousness, and shalom. Ours is the task of directing people’s attention once again to the God who loves us, whose steadfast love endures forever, who is at work in our lives and in our world making all things new, who alone is our hope and our salvation. So today, we join the psalmist in praise and declare, “O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever (v. 29).”